

ADAPTED VERSION

GRADE 3



Alice in Wonderland

MONTESSORI-STYLE CLASSIC

Grade 3 Reader

Alice in Wonderland

by Lewis Carroll, adaptation by Core Knowledge Foundation



Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank of the river with nothing to do. Once or twice, she had peeked into the book her sister was reading. But the book had no pictures or conversations in it. “What is the use of a book,” thought Alice, “without pictures or conversations?”

It was a hot day. The heat made Alice feel sleepy. She was thinking if the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies. Just then, a White Rabbit ran past her.

There was nothing so very remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so very peculiar to hear the Rabbit say to itself, “Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!” But when the Rabbit took a watch out of its pocket, Alice jumped to her feet. She ran after the Rabbit and saw him pop down a large rabbit hole.

Alice followed the Rabbit down the hole, never once thinking how she would get out again. The rabbit hole dipped suddenly down. Alice found herself falling down what seemed to be a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time to look about her. She looked at the sides of the well. They were filled with cupboards and Bookshelves.

“Well!” thought Alice to herself. “After a fall like this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down the stairs!” Down, down, down. Would the fall ever come to an End?

“I wonder how many miles I’ve fallen by this time.” Alice said aloud. “I must be getting somewhere near the center of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think. I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth! How funny it will be to come out among the people that walk with their heads pointing downwards! I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is. ‘Please, Ma’am, is this New Zealand? Or Australia?’” She felt that she was dozing off when suddenly, thump! Down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves.

Alice was not hurt. She got up and looked around. Before her was a long tunnel. The White Rabbit was hurrying down it. Alice ran after him. She heard him say, "Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" She thought she was catching up to the White Rabbit. Then, she turned the corner and, poof! He was gone. Alice found herself in a long, low hall. There were many doors, but they were all locked. She wondered how she would ever get out.

Suddenly, she came upon a little three-legged table. It was made of solid glass. There was nothing on it but a tiny, golden key. But, it would not open any of the doors.

Then, Alice spotted a curtain she had not noticed before. Behind it was a little door about fifteen inches high. She tried the little, golden key in the lock. It fit! The door led into a small tunnel. It was not much larger than a rat hole. Alice knelt down and looked out into the loveliest garden she had ever seen. She longed to get out of that dark hall. She longed to wander about the garden. But the doorway was tiny. She could not even get her head through it.

There seemed to be no use in waiting by the little door so Alice went back to the table. This time, she found a little bottle on it.

“Hmm,” said Alice. “That was not there before.” Alice looked closely at the bottle. The label said, ‘DRINK ME.’ “I’ll look first,” Alice said, “to see if it’s marked Poison.”

The bottle was not marked Poison so Alice decided to taste it. She found it had a sort of mixed flavor. It tasted like cherry tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast. Alice drank it up.



“What a curious feeling!” said Alice. She was shrinking smaller and smaller. Soon, she was only ten inches high. That was just the right size to fit through the little door that led to the garden. But, when she got to the door, she found she had forgotten the little, golden key. She went back to the table for it, but she was too short to reach it. Alice sat down and cried, but soon her eye fell on a little, glass box that was under the table. She opened it and found a very small cake. The words ‘EAT ME’ were spelled out on the cake with currants.

“I’ll eat it,” said Alice enthusiastically. “Curiouser and curiouser!” cried Alice. “Now, I’m growing larger and larger! Goodbye, feet!” Alice’s head bumped against the roof of the

hall. She was nine feet tall. She grabbed the little, golden key and ran to the garden door.

But, she was now too large to go through the doorway! All she could do was peek into the garden with one eye. Alice sat down and began to cry again. She went on, crying gallons of tears, until there was a large pool around her.

Then, Alice heard a pattering of feet in the distance. It was the White Rabbit returning. He was splendidly dressed, with a pair of white gloves in one hand and a large fan in the other. He was muttering to himself, "Oh, The Duchess! Won't she be cross if I've kept her waiting!" When the Rabbit came near her, Alice tried to speak to him.

"If you please, sir—" The Rabbit was startled. He dropped his gloves and his fan and scurried away into the darkness. "How odd everything is today!" said Alice.

As she said this, Alice could see that she was shrinking again. In another moment, splash! She was up to her chin in water. Poor Alice was swimming in a pool of her own tears.

"I wish I hadn't cried so much!" said Alice as she swam about in search of a way out. Thankfully, Alice did find a way out. She was not one for sitting still doing nothing, so she began

to wander further and further into Wonderland.

It was at that point that she came upon a large, blue Caterpillar. The Caterpillar was sitting on a mushroom and smoking a pipe.

Alice stood on her tiptoes and peeked over the edge of the mushroom. Her eyes met those of the Caterpillar. The two of them looked at each other for some time in silence. At last, the Caterpillar took the pipe out of its mouth and asked, “Who are you?”

Alice replied, “I—I hardly know, sir. I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I have been changed several times since then.”

“What do you mean by that?” said the Caterpillar sternly. “Explain yourself!”

“I can’t explain myself, sir,” said Alice, “because I’m not myself, you see.”

“I don’t see,” said the Caterpillar.

“I’m afraid I can’t put it more clearly,” Alice replied. “I find that being so many different sizes in one day is very confusing.”

“It isn’t,” said the Caterpillar.

Alice felt a little irritated by the Caterpillar and she turned away.

“Come back!” the Caterpillar called. “I’ve something important to say!”

This sounded promising, so Alice turned and came back again.

“Keep your temper,” said the Caterpillar.

“Is that all?” said Alice.

In a minute or two, the Caterpillar took the pipe out of his mouth and got down off the mushroom. Then, he crawled away into the grass. As he went, he said, “One side will make you grow taller. The other side will make you grow shorter.”

“One side of what?” thought Alice to herself.

“Of the mushroom,” said the Caterpillar. In another moment, the Caterpillar was gone.

Alice broke off a bit of each side of the mushroom. She ate small bites and managed to bring herself back to her normal height.



“Cheshire Cat,” Alice said, “would you tell me, please, which way I should walk from here?”

“That depends a lot on where you want to get to,” said the Cat.

“I don’t care much where—” said Alice.

“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.

“—so long as I get somewhere,” Alice added.

“Oh, you’re sure to do that,” said the Cat, “if you only walk long enough.”

Alice tried another question, “What sort of people live here?”

“In that direction,” said the Cat, waving his right paw, “lives a Mad Hatter. In that direction lives a March Hare. Visit either of them if you like: they’re both mad.”

“But I don’t want to visit with mad people,” Alice remarked.

“Oh, you can’t help that,” said the Cat. “We’re all mad here.”

Then, the Cat vanished slowly, beginning at the end of his tail and ending with his grin, which remained some time after the

rest of him had gone. “Well!” thought Alice. “A grin without a cat! How curious!”

She walked a bit and came to a house with a table set up in front. The March Hare and the Mad Hatter were having tea. A Dormouse was sitting between them. The table was large but the three of them were all crowded together at one corner of it.

“No room! No room!” they cried out when they saw Alice coming.

“There’s plenty of room!” said Alice indignantly. She sat down in a large armchair at one end of the table.

“Have some lemonade,” said the March Hare. Alice looked all around the table.

“I don’t see any lemonade,” she remarked.

“There isn’t any,” said the March Hare.

“Then, it wasn’t very civil of you to offer it,” said Alice angrily.

“It wasn’t very civil of you to sit down without being invited,” said the March Hare.

The Mad Hatter looked at Alice for some time. At last, he said, “Why is a raven like a writing desk?”

“A riddle!” thought Alice. “We shall have some fun now!”

“I believe I can guess that,” she added aloud.

“Do you mean that you think you know the answer to it?” asked the March Hare.

“Exactly so,” said Alice.

“Then, you should say what you mean,” the March Hare went on.

“I do,” Alice replied. “At least, I mean what I say— that’s the same thing, you know.”

“Not the same thing at all!” said the Mad Hatter.

“Why, you might as well say that ‘I see what I eat’ is the same thing as ‘I eat what I see!’”

“You might as well say,” added the Dormouse, which seemed to be walking and talking in its sleep, “that ‘I breathe when I sleep’ is the same thing as ‘I sleep when I breathe!’”

“It is the same thing with you,” said the Mad Hatter. Then, he turned to Alice again and asked, “Have you guessed the riddle yet?”

“No, I give up,” Alice replied. “What’s the answer?”

“I haven’t the slightest idea,” said the Mad Hatter.

“Nor I,” said the March Hare.

“Well,” thought Alice, “this is the strangest tea party I ever was at in all my life!”

Alice stayed for a while longer and listened to the Dormouse tell a story about three sisters who lived at the bottom of a treacle well. The story was very odd indeed. Alice, confused by the tale, frequently questioned the Dormouse. At last, a frustrated Alice walked off.

“It’s the strangest tea party I ever was at in all my life!” Alice concluded.



As Alice wandered further into Wonderland, she found a door in a tree that led into a hallway. The hallway led into the beautiful garden that she had been in earlier. Remarkably, upon entering the garden, she met a huge number of people, including royal courtiers and royal children, as well as the King and Queen of Hearts. They were about to begin a game of croquet and they invited Alice to play.

The game itself proved to be nothing but chaos, partly because the croquet ground was all ridges and furrows. The croquet balls were live hedgehogs and the mallets were flamingos. Alice found that her biggest problem was managing her flamingo and stopping the balls—or hedgehogs—from walking away. In addition, the players all played at the same time without waiting for their turn. The Queen, for her part, began stamping about and shouting, “Off with his head!” or “Off with her head!”

But lucky for Alice, she was removed from the game by none other than the Queen who was eager for Alice to meet the Mock Turtle. On their way to meet the Mock Turtle, Alice was introduced to the Gryphon. What are a Mock Turtle and a Gryphon? Alice did not know either; nor did she ever get an answer that made sense. The best answer is that they

are two more examples of the extraordinary inhabitants of Wonderland.

Together the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon told the Queen and Alice stories of their school days. They recalled the subjects they had studied in school, including Reeling, Writhing, and Ambition, not to mention ancient and modern Mystery. Alice was quite certain that she had not yet studied these subjects.

This odd conversation was stopped by the news that an important trial had begun. Alice raced off with the Gryphon to discover that the Knave of Hearts was on trial for stealing some tarts.

Just like the game of croquet, the trial itself was a confusing mess. The witnesses were not at all helpful. Quite strangely, Alice herself was called as a witness. When the Queen said that the sentence should be announced before the jury had decided upon their verdict,

Alice was ready to scream. In fact, she did. “Stuff and nonsense!” said Alice loudly. “The idea of having the sentence first!”

“Hold your tongue!” said the Queen, turning purple.

“I won’t!” said Alice.

“Off with her head!” yelled the Queen.

Again, lucky for Alice, just at that moment she woke up on the river bank beside her sister. The sun was still shining and it was indeed a beautiful day. Alice eagerly told her sister all about her dream and her adventures in Wonderland. Alice’s sister was quite entertained by the stories of Wonderland and the way in which Alice told them. Alice’s eyes twinkled and shone as she told her sister about the Caterpillar, the Cheshire Cat, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the King and Queen of Hearts, not to mention the White Rabbit.

As Alice skipped away to enjoy some afternoon tea, her sister imagined this magical world full of curious creatures. Alice’s sister hoped that Alice would always remember the day that she dreamed of Wonderland and continue to tell the stories.

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